



COUNTY OF SISKIYOU

Board of Supervisors

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November 4, 2008

Larry Friedman, Foreman
Siskiyou County Grand Jury
POB 488
Yreka, CA 96097

Subject: 2008 Siskiyou County Grand Jury Report

Dear Mr. Foreman and Members of the Grand Jury:

The Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors would like to thank the Grand Jury for the opportunity to comment on several findings and recommendations in the 2008 Siskiyou County Grand Jury Report.

County Auditor's Office

Recommendation #1:

The supervisory staff in the Auditor's office should attend management and communications workshops which focus on more effective management styles.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors concurs and will request implementation of additional management trainings including: UC Davis, Liebert Cassidy Labor relations and Harassment prevention training for Auditor staff.

Recommendation #2:

The County should include means which ensures that a process is available for the employee to be heard confidentially when perceived situations of harassment or hostile work environment within the workplace occur. No repercussions should arise from the reporting.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The County has an excellent Harassment Policy, Section 2.2 of the Personnel Policies, which encourages reporting of any perceived harassment and prohibits any form of retaliation against county employees.

Recommendation #3:

The Personnel Department should better educate employees about the grievance procedures to be followed in case of retaliatory action.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors will direct the County Personnel Manager to send out annual reminders via all county email, regarding various county policies and procedures.

Recommendation #4:

The Board of Supervisors and Chief Administrative Officer should review *County of Siskiyou Personnel Policy 8.2: Personal Appearance and Demeanor* for clarification and development of specific guidelines. The Board should consider inclusion of a violation reporting process, a fair review system, and an enforcement procedure.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board acknowledges that all complaints regarding inappropriate attire are reported to the CAO office. These matters are reviewed and discussed with Department Head, who then addresses the issue directly with employee.

Recommendation #5:

The Board of Supervisors should investigate possible options for reorganizing the Auditor-Recorder-Controller's Office and respective responsibilities contained therein.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors would like to review the duties and responsibilities of the Auditor's function and staffing levels in other like-counties in California. The Board will review the possibilities of moving the

Recorder's function to the Clerk or Assessor, moving Payroll & Budget functions to the County Administrator, and other possible reorganization scenarios. The Board acknowledges that the current CDBG program also resides within the Auditor's Office, and this may not be the appropriate location for the program in the long run.

2008 Siskiyou County Grand Jury Report

Siskiyou County Personnel Policies

Recommendation #1:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors evaluate the effectiveness and expand the Personnel Policies.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the Personnel Manager's response.

Recommendation #1a:

In an organization such as the County, there must be an internal process for addressing complaints and grievances that has some involvement from County staff. Practically speaking, a complaint cannot be addressed if the issue is not brought to attention of the CAO, Personnel Manager, Department Head or subject of the complaint.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the Personnel Manager's response.

Recommendation #1b:

Develop a grievance procedure which provides employee assurance of privacy, oversight and resolution.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors acknowledges that the Grand Jury should have requested and been provided a copy of the county's current policies and procedures manual.

Recommendation #1c:

Provide education of employees through workshops about their rights and grievance procedures.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the Personnel Manager's response.

Recommendation #1d:

Require a separate and private interview with a personnel officer when an employee disagrees with a performance review. The personnel officer should have a means of demonstrating to the employee subsequent actions. Assumption that the manager is always right does not provide a grievance process for the employee.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the Personnel Manager's response.

Recommendation #1e:

Require that a confidential exit interview be conducted with a personnel officer for all internally transferred, terminated, and departing employees, regardless of cause. This should occur in a private setting outside of the employee's department. The interview could provide insight into possible problems.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

Please see #1f.

Recommendation #1f:

Develop an exit interview form which must be used consistently with all departures, terminations, and internal county transfers in order to establish that all exiting procedures have been followed. A signature and date must be obtained on this form which should be retained in the respective employee file.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors would like to develop additional methods of soliciting and receiving employee feedback.

Recommendation #1g:

The Dress code, Personnel Policy 8.2, is insufficient and needs to be specific and detailed. Clarify the dress code, recognizing differences in department responsibilities. The internet has valuable resources for clarifying descriptions of business attire.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

Department Heads have a certain amount of discretion as far as implementation of the dress code. We will ask for this topic to be discussed at a future Department Head Council meeting.

Recommendation #2:

The Board of Supervisors should examine the role of Personnel Officer and the respective departments' responsibilities.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

See response #2d below.

Recommendation #2a:

A Personnel Officer should have the ability, when applicable, to oversee potential problems within county departments before transfers, resignations, terminations, or leaves of absence occur. This would encourage department heads to observe professional business performance rules and provide a safe, productive work environment free from harassment.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors needs further clarification from the Grand Jury on this item.

Recommendation #2b:

A Personnel Officer needs to regularly ascertain that all personnel policies and codes are being judiciously followed within all departments. This process needs to be accountable to the CAO and reported to the Board.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Personnel Manager does provide reports to the Board of Supervisors with regards to the 18 different departments and their adherence to the Personnel Policies and codes.

Recommendation #2c:

With the asset of greater technology a Personnel Officer should be able to identify how to best streamline and provide consistent personnel procedures. Tracking of employee turnover is one aspect of technology which would be beneficial to the County.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the Personnel Manager's response.

Recommendation #2d:

The Personnel Department should be actively involved with employees and management. The Department should provide services to the County beyond processing papers and files.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors will explore providing additional authorities to the County Administrator and Personnel Manager.

Recommendation #3:

Professional development and management of our human resources are important due to the litigious nature of our culture. In order for the County to assure a safe and professional work environment, the Board of Supervisors should budget for and implement educational workshops which train and cross train staff in personnel management, delegation of duties, internal department service, employee rights, and other subjects. Improving supervisory communication and personnel management should be a high priority.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the Personnel Manager's response.

Recommendation #1:

The Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors should develop an expansion plan for facilities to handle increased population growth.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors did reject the recent Jail Expansion program by the State (AB 900) due to the additional personnel costs in excess of \$1 million and numerous other factors.

Recommendation #2:

The Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors should develop a plan for adding a visually clear barrier around the housing control station for officer safety.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors will work with the Sheriff to accomplish the visual clear barrier for the housing control station.

Recommendation #3:

The Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors should develop a plan for installing recorded indirect video equipment or a similar system to insure safety of all utilizing the visitation area. This could eliminate note passage in the visitation area.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the Sheriff's response.

Recommendation #4:

The Siskiyou County Sheriff should meet with the county chief of police association, California Highway Patrol, and other agencies booking inmates into the jail and discuss guidelines for chain of custody.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors appreciates the fact that Sheriff Riggins meets monthly with all law enforcement agency heads.

Recommendation #5:

The Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors, in conjunction with the Siskiyou County

Sheriff's Department, should enhance vocational programs to include more of the female inmate population.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the Sheriff's response.

Recommendation #6:

Jail staff needs to emphasize to all inmates the use of the Legal Research Fund for inmate assistance.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the Sheriff's response.

Recommendation #7:

Jail staff should continually encourage inmates to utilize outside services to aid in their re-entry into society.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors would be receptive to other suggestions on this matter.

Recommendation #8:

The Siskiyou Department of Public Health and Community Development should inspect the entire jail facility every quarter.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

See response from the Director of Public Health and Community Development Department regarding recommendation #8.

Recommendation #9:

The Siskiyou County Administrator should monitor the County of Siskiyou Official Government Website and perform updates in a timely manner.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors requests that Department Heads maintain better coordination with the County's contracted webmaster, to ensure county

website is updated in a timely manner.

2008 Siskiyou County Grand Jury Report

Jail Inspection

The Public Health and Community Development Department has been asked to respond to a Grand Jury recommendation to inspect the entire jail facility quarterly.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors accepts the response from the Director the Public Health & Community Development Department.

2007 Siskiyou County Grand Jury Report

J.H. Ranch Investigation

The Board of Supervisors should issue a cease and desist order that occupancy shall not exceed the 136 occupancy level at the JH Ranch until a full review of environmental, noise, traffic safety, and all other issues noted in the County Planning Director's letter dated November 30, 2006, are resolved.

Response from the Board of Supervisors:

The Board of Supervisors supports the Department's response, and will be working with our new County Counsel on this project in the near future.

Please contact us if you have any questions or comments regarding these responses.

Sincerely,



W.R. Overman, Chair
Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors